

# U.S. Involvement in WWII

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# The Outbreak of WWII in Europe

Though WWII began in 1939, the United States would not join the allied forces until 1941, following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. Though FDR, the U.S. president at the time, wanted to intervene in the war, the American people did not want to join the war effort.

In 1939, 94% of Americans were against going to war.



# Isolationism

Isolationism: The policy of remaining separate from the affairs or interests of other groups, especially the political affairs of other countries.

Isolationists believed that World War II was ultimately a dispute between foreign nations and that the United States had no good reason to get involved. The best policy, they claimed, was for the United States to build up its own defenses and avoid antagonizing either side.



# The Attack on Pearl Harbor

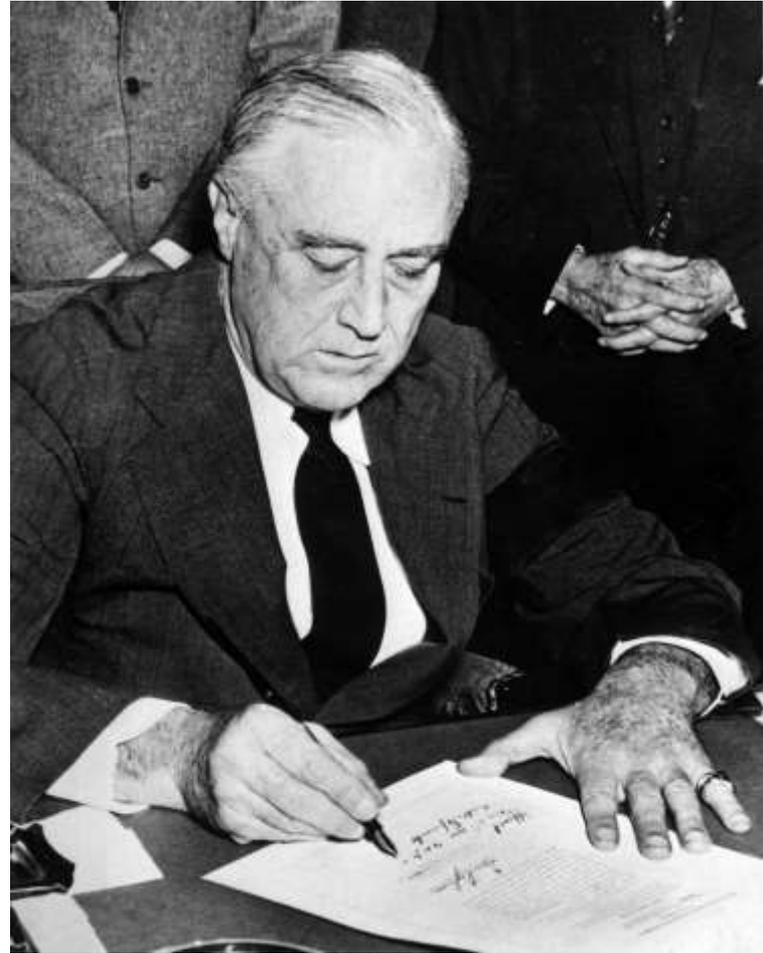
America's isolation from war ended on December 7, 1941, when Japan staged a surprise attack on American military installations in the Pacific. The most devastating strike came at Pearl Harbor, the Hawaiian naval base where much of the US Pacific Fleet was located.

Over 2,400 servicemen and civilians lost their lives.



# The U.S. Enters the War

On December 8th, President Roosevelt asked Congress to declare war against Japan. The declaration passed with just one dissenting vote. Three days later, Germany and Italy, allied with Japan, declared war on the United States. America was now drawn into a global war.



# The War Effort

In the months after Pearl Harbor, the nation swiftly mobilized its human and material resources for war to fight in both the Pacific and in Europe.

The U.S. congress implemented the draft to recruit soldiers even before the U.S. entered the war. By late 1942, all men aged 18 to 64 were required to register for the draft, however, many men volunteered to fight as well.

Eventually, 15,000,000 men and women would be employed by the American armed forces.



# The Home Front

The war changed the everyday lives of Americans across the United States. Rationing became part of everyday life. Americans learned to conserve vital resources. They lived with price controls, dealt with shortages of everything from nylons to housing, and volunteered for jobs ranging from air raid warden to Red Cross worker.



# The Home Front

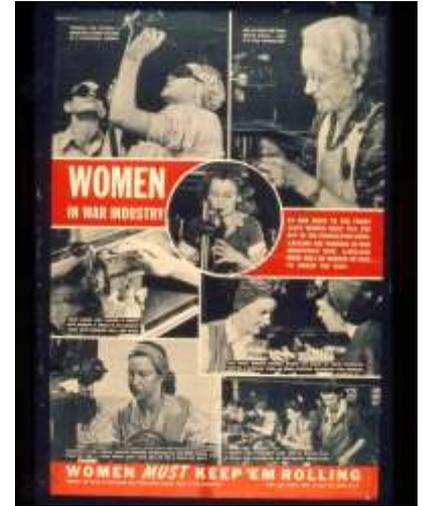
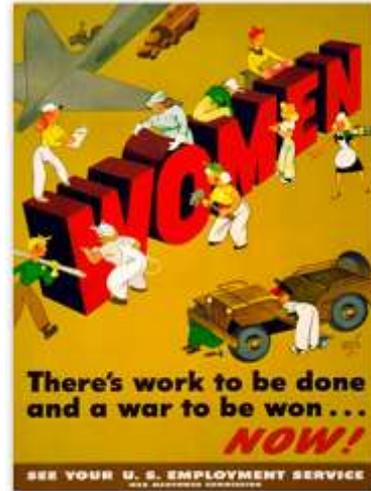
People planted “Victory gardens” so that other food resources could be used to support the war effort.

“Do With Less, So They'll Have More” was a common phrase circulated to motivate people to conserve resources and items such as coffee and meat.



# The U.S. Joins the Fight

It would be 2 years, not until 1943, before the United States would be ready for large-scale offensive operations after years of raising funds, preparing the armed forces, and developing its industry.



# Operation Overlord

Operation Overlord was the codename for the Battle of Normandy, the **Allied** operation that launched the successful invasion of German-occupied **Western Europe** during **World War II**. The operation was launched on June 6th of 1944 with the **Normandy Landings (D-Day)**. A 1,200-plane **airborne assault** preceded an **amphibious assault** involving more than 5,000 vessels.

Nearly 160,000 troops crossed the **English Channel** on June 6th, and more than two million Allied troops were in France by the end of August.



# The Battle of the Bulge

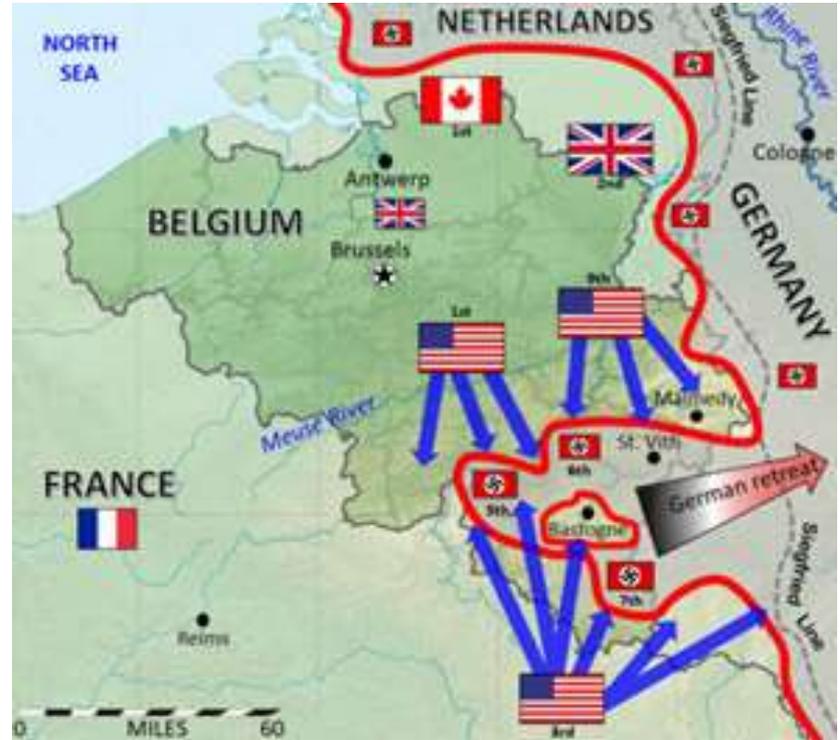
Called “the greatest American battle of the war” by **Winston Churchill**, the Battle of the Bulge in Belgium was **Hitler**’s last major offensive in **World War II** against the Western Front. Hitler’s aim was to split the Allies in their drive toward **Germany**. The German troops’ failure to divide **Britain**, **France** and America paved the way to victory for the allies.



# The Battle of the Bulge

Lasting six brutal weeks, from December 16th of 1944 to January 25th of 1945, the assault took place during frigid weather conditions, with some 30 German divisions attacking battle-fatigued American troops across 85 miles of densely wooded Forest.

The U.S. army suffered over 100,000 casualties in this battle.



# The End of the War

By 1945, the allies were able to successfully invade Germany as Soviet forces successfully pushed forward from the east.

On May 8th, 1945, Germany surrendered. After the atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan surrendered on September 2nd, 1945, and WWII came to an end. The war cost the lives of more than 330,000 American soldiers. Many more were permanently injured or maimed.



# Japanese Internment

Despite the positive outcomes of American involvement in WWII, the appalling treatment of **Japanese** and Japanese-Americans in the U.S. during the war demonstrates the inhumane and unjust consequences of war.

In 1942, on the basis of groundless racial fears and suspicions, virtually the entire Japanese-American population of the West Coast, amounting to 110,000 persons, was rounded up and imprisoned in “relocation” centers, which the inmates regarded as concentration camps. Japanese-Americans lost their liberty, and in most cases, their property as well.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cZTioTkHcB0>